JOSEPH D. TYDINGS
MARYLAND

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, D.C.

January 5, 1966

Mr. Harold Weisberg
Hyattstown, Maryland 20734

Dear Mr. Weisberg:

As a result of my visit to Southeast Asia this fall, I am persuaded that our course in Vietnam is basically sound. Politics is the art of choosing among available alternatives. War is hell, particularly this one, but I feel the alternative of unilateral withdrawal is less acceptable.

Our objectives are limited. We do not want territory or a military garrison in Asia. Our military action is, and should remain, appropriately limited. We do not want to destroy North Vietnam, merely persuade it to stop making war against its neighbor.

While I support our basic policy, I agree with those who feel we must exert greater efforts to achieve a negotiated solution. I also feel that we must place greater emphasis upon economic development and social reform. Fortunately, I found that our military and civilian personnel are aware of the importance of civic action programs. In the long-run, the outcome of this struggle may depend less upon bullets than upon village schools, medical clinics, better rice yields, and improved governmental institutions.

There is not space in a letter to elaborate on my conclusions, but I intend to do so in a newsletter to be distributed next month. I will see that you receive a copy.

Sincerely,

Joseph D. Tydings

JDT:awb